

# REP. JOE COURTNEY

Serving Connecticut's Second District



## Mid-Year Legislative Update

An Overview of Our Work  
for Eastern Connecticut  
Families, Workers,  
Veterans, and More

## A MAJOR SURGE IN EASTERN CT MANUFACTURING

As Chairman of the House Seapower Subcommittee, which oversees Navy shipbuilding, Rep. Courtney has secured critical bipartisan support for our region's submarine industrial base and manufacturing sector.

- Courtney led a bipartisan coalition in the House to secure authorization and funding to **restore a second Virginia-class submarine in the 2021 budget**, reversing a Trump Administration plan to break the two-a-year build rate.
- In June, the **Navy awarded a \$10.3 billion contract award to construct the first two Columbia-class submarines at EB** — a major investment in the future of our region that Courtney has long championed. The House also passed Courtney's proposal to provide new authority that ensures the cost-effective purchase of these first two submarines.

- On July 17, the U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, NY, issued a **final decision in a dredging case vital to CT's maritime economy**. Courtney worked with the EPA for 8 years to create the workable, environmentally sound plan to select the ELDS, and he organized maritime stakeholders to help guide the judge's decision when that selection was challenged. The decision was essential to everything from boating and fishing to submarine launch and construction.

## SUPPORTING OUR REGION'S VETERANS

Rep. Courtney has worked across the aisle to ensure that our veterans have the support and care they deserve by:

- **Defending veteran students who have been defrauded by for-profit colleges.** Courtney helped pass bipartisan legislation, supported by the American Legion and many other veterans groups, to protect these students from bad actors — the bill was unfortunately vetoed by President Trump.

- Helping secure **a new, larger location for the New London VA Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)** for eastern Connecticut veterans. The CBOC's new lease award will keep it centrally located in New London and provides nearly 16,000 sq. ft. of space to provide care and services for our veterans.



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**America has faced unprecedented challenges this year, and eastern Connecticut has risen to meet every one of them.**



## ADDRESSING THE CRUMBLING FOUNDATIONS CRISIS

Congressman Courtney has continued working to ensure eastern Connecticut gets the support it needs to address the crumbling foundations crisis by:

- Securing \$3 million in federal funds, plus \$1.5 million last year, for **research to develop new solutions for repairing homes impacted by pyrrhotite.**

## LOWERING THE COST OF HIGHER ED

Many people and families in eastern Connecticut are working to pay off student loans. Congressman Courtney is working to support them.

- This summer, Courtney introduced a bill that would let Americans **refinance their legacy student loans down to the current low rate of 2.7%.** Today, Americans can refinance their debt on mortgages and car and motorcycle loans — this bill would give Americans with student loans the same opportunity.

- Securing clarification from the IRS that **financial assistance paid to eastern CT homeowners through CFSIC will not be treated as taxable income** — a major update, and just in time for tax filing season.
- Working to include **three bipartisan crumbling foundations provisions in the Moving Forward Act** that would expand access to federal funding to help homeowners address pyrrhotite damage; extend the “casualty loss” tax deduction for concrete repairs; and authorize funding to help schools with crumbling foundations, such as Birch Grove in Tolland.



## ASSISTING WORKERS WITH UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS

A constituent from Chester contacted Rep. Courtney's office after applying for unemployment

benefits with the State of Connecticut, and going two months without receiving the assistance she qualified for. Unemployment claims are handled at the state level, but Courtney's office was still able to help — they contacted the CT Department of Labor and the constituent's state rep. in Chester to compel a speedy response. Shortly after, **the constituent received all of her missed unemployment payments retroactively and began receiving the weekly benefits she deserved.**

Courtney's staff was contacted by a family in Suffield whose father was hospitalized for a

## CONNECTING FAMILIES WITH LOVED ONES

non-COVID injury. They were unable to visit him and were concerned that because supplies were in high demand, their father would not be able to receive the care he needed.

**Courtney's office acted as a liaison between the family and the hospital and confirmed that the father was able to access all the equipment he needed,** even though it was in limited supply at the time. Knowing their father had the proper care he required helped reassure the family, and now, weeks later, the father has returned home fully recovered thanks to our region's health care professionals.

## HELPING OUR VETERANS ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS

A U.S. Army veteran from Norwich was on the cusp of purchasing her first home, but the VA was slow in transmitting paperwork that proved her veteran status. Without it, her home loan process was facing delays that could have caused her to lose out on her first house.

Courtney's team was asked to step in. His staff contacted the CT National Guard to obtain the veteran's entire personnel record, including records that proved her service. With the records in-hand, **the Norwich veteran was approved for the VA Home Loan she deserved,** and she purchased her first home here in eastern Connecticut.

## WORKING WITH SMALL BUSINESSES TO SECURE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Congressman Courtney has continued working to ensure eastern Connecticut gets the support it needs to address the crumbling foundations crisis by:

Courtney's office assisted eastern Connecticut businesses, such as Environics in Tolland and Tire Town in Vernon, during the COVID-19 pandemic by assisting with their applications for federal resources. When Rachel Stansel, president of Environics, and Tire Town co-owner John Thompson contacted Rep. Courtney, his

team helped them navigate and spur along the application process with local lenders. Courtney's office **helped both local businesses secure federal PPP loans to relieve the short-term pressure of decreased sales**, and they've helped many other local businesses with PPP loans, Economic Injury Disaster Loans, and more.

## BY THE NUMBERS

Rep. Courtney's team has kept in touch with workers and families to give them the most up-to-date information on resources throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the beginning of the year, Courtney's office has:

- Responded to over **62,500 calls, emails, and messages** received by the office
- Hosted **6 Telephone Town Halls** with over **27,500 participants**
- Provided nearly **80,000 families** with a comprehensive COVID-19 Resources Guide, which is always available at [courtney.house.gov/COVID19](https://courtney.house.gov/COVID19)



## BY THE NUMBERS

Rep. Courtney has helped welcome home more than **\$15.9 MILLION** in federal grant funding and congressionally authorized federal contracts in 2020 alone:

A **\$55,000** grant award to support the **Eugene O'Neill Theater Center** in Waterford

- Over **\$5.1 million** in federal **Head Start** funding to support eastern Connecticut early childhood education
- More than **\$800,000** to support coastal security and safety in Mystic, New London, Norwich, and more

- **\$1.5 million** to support the new **EWIB initiative** to train people in eastern Connecticut for jobs in the health care sector

- Over **\$4 million** in new **Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)** grant funding for New London and Norwich

- More than **\$2.5 million** in direct grant funding through the **CARES Act** to strengthen eastern Connecticut's response to COVID-19

- A new, **\$2 million contract award** to **American Woolen** in Stafford Springs to produce U.S. Army fabrics right here in eastern Connecticut. The contract award was authorized by the CARES Act.

## MORE ASSISTANCE WILL BE NEEDED

to help our communities through this economic crisis. Congressman Courtney has voted for legislation that would provide more aid to American workers and families by:

- **Providing schools and teachers with the funding they need** to safely operate during COVID-19
- Extending and enhancing **Unemployment Insurance**
- **Supporting small businesses** by strengthening important lending programs, such as PPP and EIDL
- **Authorizing funding specifically for towns with 50,000 or fewer residents**—which includes every town in CT-02
- **Expanding testing, tracing, and treatment** for a safer, speedier recovery
- Creating a **hazard pay fund** for Americans who performed essential services throughout the pandemic